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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0613

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT,IS, XF
SUBJECT: ISRAELI ATTITUDES TOWARD AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE

REF STATE 16203

1. IN REPLY TO DEPARTMENT'S REQUEST FOR OUR COMMENTS ON ISRAELI ATTITUDES TO AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE AS REFLECTED IN DECEMBER 1975 PORI POLL AND EMBASSY YEAR-END ASSESSMENT, WE HAVE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS.

2. AS DEPARTMENT CORRECTLY OBSERVED, OUR VIEW THAT MOST ISRAELIS REGARD ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE AS TANTAMOUNT TO "NATIONAL SUICIDE" REFERS TO A PLO-CONTROLLED STATE. FEW ISRAELI TOAY CAN CONCEIVE OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTNIAN STATE COMING INTO EXISTENCE WHICH WOULD NOT SOONER OR LATER COME UNDER PLO CONTROL. FROM ISRAELI PERSPECTIVE THERE ARE TWO POSSIBILITIES, BOTY OF WHICH WOULD TEND TO THE SAME FINAL RESULT: A) SUCH A STATE UPON ITS INCEPTION IS A PLO STATE; OR B) A JORDANIAN-WEST BANK OR WEST BANK/ GAZAN LEADERSHIP CADRE GOVERNS AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE INITIALLY BUT IS EVENTUALLY SWEPTAWAY BY MORE MILITANT PLO ELEMENTS. THE COROLLARY IS THE DEEPLY-HELD CONVICTION OF MOST ISRAELIS THAT THE PLO CAN NEVER CHANGE ITS STRIPES, AND THAT ANY VAGUE OR NOMINAL
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RECOGNITITION OF ISRAEL WOULD CONSTITUTE NOTHING MORE

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THAN A TACTICAL MANEUVER TO ESTABLISH A PALESTNIAN STATE ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA AS AN INTERIM STEP TOWARD THE DESTRUCTION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL .;

3. (#)S TO REASON FOR INCREASEFROM JUNE -1974 TO DECEMBER 1975 IN PERCENTAGE OF PORI POLL RESPONDENTS WILLING TO CONSIDER ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT PALESTNIAN STATE (PROVIDED PALESTINIANS RECOGNIZE ISRAEL AND STOP ALL HOSTILITIES), IT SHOULD BE RECALLED THAT INTERNAL DEBATE ON PALESTNIAN ISSUE FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES ONLY BEGAN WITH TRANSITION FROM MEIR TO RABIN. WHILE MARGINAL ELEMENTS MAINLY IN ISRAELI ACADEMIC WORLD AND SMALL FAR-LEFT PARTIES HAD BEEN URGING RECONSIDERATION OF ISRAELI APPROACH TO PALESTINIAN AND TERRITORIAL ISSUES THROUGHOUT 1967-1973 PERIOD, ISRAELI ESTABLISHMENT HAD BECOME SATISFIED WITH AND CONFIDENT OF DURABILITY OF STATUS QUO. IN SUMMER OF 1974 MAINSTEAM ISRAELIS WERE JUST BEGINNING TO TAKE HARD SECOND LOOK AT ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING THE POLICY OF PRECEDING SIX YEARS.

4. THIS PROCESS HAS INDEED GATHERED SOME STEAM IN LAST EIGHTEEN MONTHS AS REFLECTED, FOR INSTANCE, IN CONTINUING PRESSURE FROM LABOR ALGINMENT DOVES FOR ADOPTIONOF YARIV FORMULA AS TACTICAL STEP TO PUT RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEADLOCK ON PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN ARAB COURTYARD. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN EVIDENT DIS-COMFITURE HERE AT CONTINUING CRITICISM FROM ABROAD OVER ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE AS REFLECTED BOTH IN STATEMENTS OF ISRAELI POLITICIANS RETURNING FROM ABROAD AND IN PRESS COMMENTARY.

5. NONETHELESS, TWO CAVEATS ARE IN ORDER: A) PORI RESPONDENTS WERE ANSWERING QUESTION WHICH IN ALL LIKELIHOOD THEY REGARDED AS ONLY HYPOTHETICAL--PERCENTAGES MIGHT BE QUITE DIFFERENT IF FORMATION OF PALESTINIAN STATE LOOMED UP AS REAL PROSPECT IN NEAR FUTURE; AND B) THIS 30 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION DOES NOT EFFECT THE FORMULATION OF GOI POLICY ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE NOR AS YET CONSTITUTE A COALESCED CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESSURE GROUP FOR RECONSIDERATION OF THAT POLICY.
DUNNIGAN

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